

the Western New York community and wishing her and her family the best in all of their future endeavors.

TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015

SPEECH OF

**HON. TULSI GABBARD**

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, June 9, 2014*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4745) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes:

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Chair, I rise today in strong support of continued funding for the Native Hawaiian Housing Block Grant.

In 1921, Congress enacted the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act (HHCA) to help Native Hawaiians who, after the overthrow and annexation of the Kingdom of Hawaii, were largely disenfranchised from their traditional homelands. HHCA sought to provide for the rehabilitation of the Native Hawaiian people through a homesteading program that would reconnect them with former Crown Lands.

In 1959, the State of Hawaii adopted the HHCA as a provision of its constitution in accordance with the Hawaii Statehood Admissions Act, Public Law 86–3. This reaffirmed the responsibility that this nation has to its indigenous people and forever embedded the mission of HHCA in Hawaii's modern history and society.

The Native Hawaiian Housing Block Grant provides the financial means to support HHCA and its mission of promoting Native Hawaiian well-being through homesteading. This is an important step towards reconciliation for the historical injustices that underline the social and economic inequality of our Native Hawaiians.

Safe and affordable housing helps to empower families to be productive members of society. Housing fulfills physical needs by providing security and shelter from weather and climate. It fulfills psychological needs by providing a sense of personal space and privacy. It fulfills social needs by providing a gathering area and communal space for the family. These factors combine to help ensure the well-being of our future generations, and are why continued funding for the Native Hawaiian Housing Block Grant program is so important.

Homesteading provided through this program helps to ease Hawaii's high cost of living and allows Native Hawaiians to remain connected to their traditional homelands. I strongly urge funding for the Native Hawaiian Housing Block Grant program, and would like to express my support for the Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act as well.

HONORING RABBI AVI AND TOBY WEISS

**HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 11, 2014*

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, there is a saying that "talent does what it can, while genius does what it must." The inner strength and spirit which moves Rabbi Avi Weiss and his wife Toby cannot be contained. The genius of their shared vision and commitment to social justice shines brightly and for all to see.

Rabbi Weiss' work isn't limited to the confines of any city or synagogue, nor has he shied away from raising his voice to lift the oppressed. He says that he is an activist because he has no other choice; it is something he must simply do.

I believe that my dear friend responds to the calling laid out by his faith. Rabbi Weiss is compelled to act in the service of others and to live by the spirit of tzedakah. It is reflective in all that he has done and all that he strives to do.

It is why his voice will always be heard in support of the oppressed. It is why he participated in a hunger strike urging the release of Soviet dissident Natan Sharansky. It is why he protested for the right of Soviet Jews to leave their homeland and seek haven elsewhere and it is why he denounced horrendous acts of genocide in Darfur.

Rabbi Weiss founded Yeshivat Chovevei Rabbinical School in order to train a new generation of Orthodox rabbis to live with the spirit of openness that he himself exemplifies. Under Rabbi Weiss' guidance, students learn how to serve not just the Orthodox community, but also the larger Jewish diaspora. Yeshivat Chovevei Rabbinical School is a family that continues to grow as each graduate takes their place in the rabbinate. I have watched its legacy grow and pray for its continued prosperity.

Rabbi Weiss is so well-known, that whenever I tell people I am from the Bronx they immediately ask if I know Rabbi Weiss. I cannot be any more pleased to say that not only does he live in my District, but he is also my neighbor and dear friend.

I would be remiss if I neglected to say that behind every good Rabbi is an equally strong woman who supports him. Toby Weiss has been both his guiding light and the foundation that gives him the strength to carry forth his work.

Religious leaders embody our hopes, aspirations and even our trepidations and fears. We look to them for guidance—for a path in which to follow—so that we might overcome the challenges before us in our own lives.

Rabbi Avi Weiss and his wife Toby are truly exemplary individuals and leaders within the Bronx community. Please join me in celebrating their legacy as Yeshivat Chovevei Rabbinical School honors them for their service and enduring commitment to making the world a better place to live.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. PETER WELCH**

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 11, 2014*

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I inadvertently voted "no" on rollcall vote No. 277, the Nadler Amendment to H.R. 4745. As a strong supporter of this amendment, my intent was to vote "yes."

IN MEMORY OF DON DAVIS AND HIS REMARKABLE IMPACT ON THE GREATER DETROIT COMMUNITY

**HON. GARY C. PETERS**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 11, 2014*

Mr. PETERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of a great citizen of the State of Michigan, Mr. Don Davis, a pioneer in music and business. Mr. Davis passed away on Thursday, June 5, 2014, at the age of 75. He is survived by his wife, Kiko, and his three children.

A three-time Grammy winner, Don knew that he had a passion for music at an early age and once told the Detroit News, "The music industry chose me. If there is a gene for music, I had one."

Don began his music career as a session musician in the early sixties for Detroit based Motown Records. He played guitar on their hits, "Money (That's What I Want)" by Barrett Strong, a song that would later be covered by The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, and The Doors, and "Bye Bye Baby" by Mary Wells, reaching number 45 on the Billboard Charts.

As a songwriter, Don experienced his first major hit in 1968 with Johnnie Taylor's "Who's Making Love," which peaked at number 5 on the Billboard Charts. In 1976, he collaborated with Johnnie Taylor again, producing the song "Disco Lady", the first single to be certified platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America.

Twenty years later, Don would expand beyond his outstanding music career to become the CEO and Chairman of the First Independence Bank, the only African-American owned bank in Michigan.

First Independence Bank, which operates a number of Detroit branches, has been named by Black Enterprise Magazine as one of the top 15 African-American owned banks in the country. In 2012, coming out of the Great Recession, First Independence Bank was able to record the most profitable year in its history and increase its total assets to \$185 million.

As CEO, Don took his responsibility to his community seriously. In his 18 years as CEO, Don made it a priority to improve his community by focusing on its housing needs and providing excellent banking services to small business owners and families in Southeast Michigan.

Over many years, Don grew First Independence Bank into a trusted financial institution with loyal customers. Don believed that First Independence Bank could provide quality services to communities and customers who were previously overlooked by other banks. He was successful in advancing this mission.